

CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An extendable draft offshore oil and gas drilling and production platform (“EDP”),
comprising:

- 5 a buoyant deck having a central opening;
 a pontoon having an adjustable buoyancy; and,
 a single buoyant column mounted upright on the pontoon and vertically movable through
the central opening of the deck.

2. The EDP of claim 1, wherein each of the pontoon and the column have a respective
10 center well therein, and wherein the center well of the column is disposed concentrically over the
center well of the pontoon.

3. The EDP of claim 1, further comprising:
means for supporting the deck on an upper end of the column.

4. The EDP of claim 3, wherein the deck supporting means comprise:
15 a plurality of radial arms fixed to the upper end of the column, the arms having locking
pin apertures in outer ends thereof;
 an upstanding receptacle on the deck, the receptacle having locking pin apertures therein
and being arranged on the deck to receive the outer ends of the radial arms in a vertical, slide-in
engagement; and,
20 locking pins extending through corresponding ones of the locking pin apertures of the
radial arms and the receptacle.

5. The EDP of claim 1, wherein the column comprises one or more compartments, at
least one of which has a buoyancy that is adjustable.

6. The EDP of claim 5, further comprising means for forcing sea water ballast into and
25 out of the adjustably buoyant compartments.

7. The EDP of claim 6, wherein the water ballast forcing means comprise pressurized air
or a pump.

8. The EDP of claim 5, wherein the compartments are tubular.

9. The EDP of claim 1, wherein a lower end of the column comprises an open truss structure.

10. The EDP of claim 2, wherein the cross-sectional shape of the center well of at least one of the pontoon and the column is circular, oval, or polygonal.

11. The EDP of claim 1, wherein the horizontal periphery of at least one of the deck and the pontoon is polygonal.

12. The EDP of claim 1, further comprising an upright derrick slidably movable on an upper surface of the deck between a first position over the central opening of the deck and a second position horizontally displaced from the first position.